

3-19-1998

# Some reservoirs already filled to the brim

RICHFIELD (AP) — With plenty of snow — and water — left in the mountains, four of 16 storage reservoirs in 11 southern and central Utah counties are already filled to the brim.

Statistics from the Natural Resources Conservation Service show that Millsite, Paiute, Quail Creek and Gunlock reservoirs are filled to capacity. Five more reservoirs are at 90 percent of capacity and most of the others are more than 70 percent full.

Still, Randy Julander, snow survey supervisor for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, said residents

shouldn't worry about flooding.

"They're expecting quite a bit more (runoff), but it should be the type that is easily managed," he said. It should mean plenty of drinking and irrigation water and doesn't pose an imminent threat, he said.

Julander said the one area of concern is the Bountiful area, where snowpack is at 150 percent of normal because storms from the southwest and west have dumped lake effect snow on the area.

"We've got one eyebrow raised," he said. "They could see a lot of their smaller streams rip and run just because of

that snowmelt."

He also said there's also a possibility that, if the jetstream moves north, the Wasatch Front could get snow and moisture later in the spring than normal.

"It's a big crap shoot if that's going to happen or not," he said. "If it does we could see lots of snowpack in those months where we normally lose snowpack."

Snowpack is already high in many areas, with the Sevier River Basin is 129 percent of average, the Beaver River Basin at 136 percent and the lower Sevier at 123 percent of normal. In

Kane, Washington, Iron and eastern Garfield counties, snowpacks are at 135 percent of normal.

Figures also show many reservoirs are filling quickly, with the Huntington, Minersville, Sevier Bridge, Gunnison and Otter Creek reservoirs and Ken's Lake all at more than 90 percent of capacity.

Lake Powell is about 85 percent full, Scofield and Joe's Valley reservoirs are 70 to 80 percent full, and upper and Lower Enterprise reservoirs and Panguitch Lake are below 70 percent of capacity.



## Water quality specialist tells concerns about sediment in Spanish Fork River

22 Mar 1998

By JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN  
The Daily Herald

SANTAQUIN — There are times when the Spanish Fork River runs red. Ray Loveless, a water quality specialist from the Utah Department of Natural Resources, said the sediment in the river is not good for fish. He said the sediment is from the mountains and is not good for the river. He said the sediment is from the mountains and is not good for the river.

domino effect: Water quality, in turn, affects the value of nearby land.

Loveless is preparing a coordinated resource management plan involving several groups to improve the Spanish Fork watershed.

Several technical advisory committees have been organized to study the Spanish Fork River watershed. They include:

- Water quality and fisheries, chaired by Loveless
- Weeds and rangeland, chaired by Craig Searle, Utah county weed specialist
- Recreation, chaired by Tim Tidwell, Spanish Fork District Ranger with the National Forest

## Coordinator says work on CUP has been longer than anticipated

22 Mar 1998

By JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN  
The Daily Herald

SANTAQUIN — The road to completion of the Central Utah Project has been longer, steeper and bumpier than anticipated, according to Ronald Johnson, CUP program coordinator for the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Johnson was a key speaker last week at the fourth annual water workshop sponsored by the Central Utah Water Conservancy District.

During the workshop, Johnson gave an update of the work the district has completed in the past year. He said significant progress has

been made on the Central Utah Project. He added that several smaller projects have been completed through the cooperative efforts of the CUWCD; the Utah Conservation, Mitigation and Reclamation Commission; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the Bureau of Reclamation; the Bureau of Indian Affairs; the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources; and the Provo River Water Users.

Highlights from the past year:

- The Diamond Fork Pipeline and road were completed ahead of schedule.

See CUP, C2

## CUP

Continued from C1

- On March 31, a draft environmental impact statement will be issued on the Spanish Fork/Nephi Irrigation System.

- Negotiations were completed with the 10 cities of the South Utah Valley Municipal Water Association for the use of 11,200 acre feet of municipal and industrial water in southern Utah County.

- The CUWCD made the first

of a series of prepayments of its municipal and industrial obligations. It paid \$35 million on the Jordan Aqueduct and \$35.5 million toward the Bonneville Unit M&I obligation.

- Water conservation goals mandated under the CUP Completion Act were established. The district has implemented 14 water conservation measures resulting in a water savings of 11,845 acre feet. The goal is 19,647 acre feet by 2002 and 39,294 acre feet by 2010.

- The Provo River Restoration Project will increase angler access to the river.

- Negotiations will begin with the Strawberry Water Users Association on the conversion of Strawberry Project water from irrigation to municipal and industrial use.

- President Clinton's fiscal 1999 budget includes \$20.4 million for the Spanish Fork/Nephi Irrigation System. Congressional budget hearings begin in Washington, D.C., this week.



## Fees Considered For Mirror Lake Highway Near Kamas

The National Forest areas along the Mirror Lake Highway have been a favorite playground for many Utah and Wyoming residents and tourists for generations. In recent years, many visitors have voiced desires for better services such as improved trails, trailheads, mapping, signing, law enforcement, resource protection, river access - and the list goes on. Now Congress has recently approved the means for the Forest Service to finance many of those needed improvements.

The Mirror Lake Highway (State Hwy. 150 between Evanston and Kamas) through the Wasatch-Cache National Forest is proposed to be part of a national "Recreation Fee Demonstration Project" beginning in 1997. A new law passed this spring allows the Forest Service to charge a nominal fee for use of this National Forest area. The good news is that fees collected are to be reinvested along the highway to meet local needs of the area's visitors.

Currently, any money collected from Forest Service operations is returned to the federal treasury. Mirror Lake Highway, American Fork Canyon, and Flaming Gorge projects are just three of forty-seven sites selected nationally for this three-year "pilot project".

Fees collected can be spent on recreation services and opportunities, environmental protection, law enforcement, resource improvements such as fish and wildlife habitat, and any other needs within the fee area. The Forest Service will be hosting meetings this fall in local communities to gather public input on implementing this new program. Just some of the considerations to be addressed are how to collect the fees and how to deal with interstate traffic and property owners using the highway. Steve Ryberg, District Ranger at Evanston and Brian Ferebee, District Ranger at Kamas, have indicated that this is a new concept for the Forest Service, as well as for the many

Mirror Lake Highway visitors. The details of implementation will have to be worked out with the help of the public, especially those who use and enjoy the Mirror Lake Highway area.

Public meeting dates and locations for the Mirror Lake Highway fee demonstration project are as follows:

Thursday, Sept. 12, at the Old City Park Building, 400 South Main, Kamas.

Tuesday, Sept. 24, at the Uinta County Library, 701 Main, Evanston, WY.

Thursday, Sept. 26, at Mountain View School Administration Building, 129 2nd Street, Mountain View, WY.

All of these meetings will start at 7 p.m. with a presentation explaining the proposal, followed by discussion among the meeting participants regarding how the proposal could be implemented. These meetings will last about two hours.



## NEW CHANNEL

# Diversions plan would send Bear River water south

*11-30-96*  
\$220 million project calls for 60-mile pipeline going into Davis, S.L. by 2015.

By Karl Cates

Deseret News staff writer

WEST HAVEN, Weber County — The state's two largest water suppliers have taken the first major steps toward channeling the Bear River south into urban Utah.

The Salt Lake County and Weber Basin water conservancy districts are partners in the proposed project, which calls annually for piping 100,000 acre-feet of water — enough for 400,000 people — south into fast-growing communities in Davis and Salt Lake counties.

"The idea would be to have a plant and a pipeline in place by 2015," said David G. Ovard, general manager of the Salt Lake district.

Construction would begin by 2010 and would cost in the neighborhood of \$20 million.

The water districts have spent about \$1.2 million in recent months buying about half the 300 acres they would need for the

project's treatment plant, which would be in West Haven, a still mostly rural town west of Ogden.

The plant would be bigger than any such facility now in existence in Utah.

District directors have also commissioned a \$160,000 engineering study to help determine the route of a 60-mile-long pipeline network that would run through Weber, Davis and Salt Lake counties, serving a number of Weber and Davis county cities before terminating at a distribution plant in Salt Lake City.

It would be augmented by perhaps 20 miles of canals that would help transport the water south from either a new dam at Honeyville or from near the river's mouth at the Great Salt Lake west of Brigham City.

The Bear is the last major undeveloped river in northern Utah and has a bounty of marketable water, said Ovard, who noted that a long-standing compact among Idaho, Utah and Wyoming — the states traversed by the serpentine river — guarantees a sizable amount to Utah.

The Legislature has mandated how the state's share is to be di-

vided among a number of competing users in Utah: the Weber and Salt Lake districts get 50,000 acre-feet apiece; upriver users in Cache County own 60,000 acre-feet, and the Bear River Conservancy District in Box Elder County is entitled to 60,000 acre-feet.

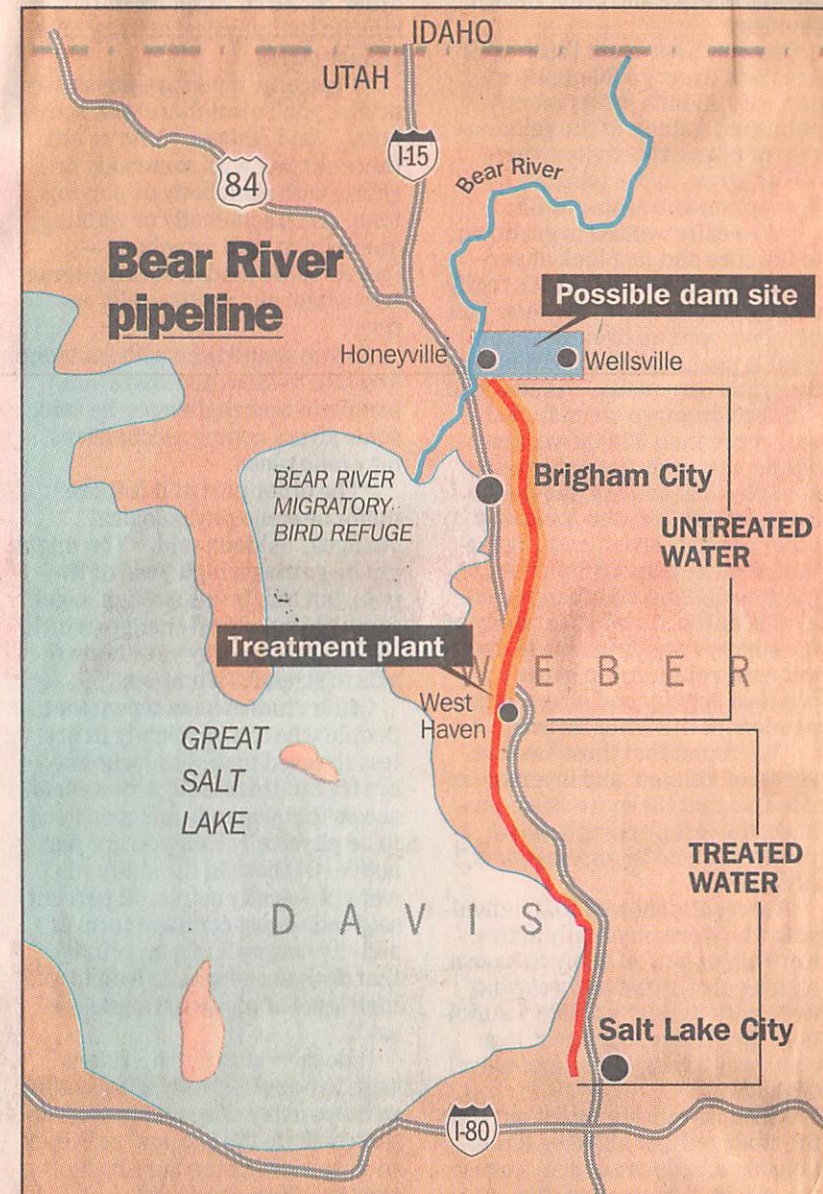
An acre-foot is about what a family of four uses in a year.

Ovard noted the proposed development is not without controversy.

Fundamental debate over how and if the Bear should be used for municipal purposes remains unresolved, and among the biggest questions are whether to proceed with a dam near Honeyville, though Ovard said the river might be tapped without that project.

Environmental groups have questioned how an effort of such magnitude would affect delicate downriver wetlands that include the Bear River National Migratory Bird Refuge as well as the state-run Harold S. Crane Waterfowl Management Area and Willard Bay State Park, another popular stopover for migratory birds.

And Ivan Flint, general manager of the Weber Basin Water Conser-



Please see **WATER** on B3



# Frankel's Central Utah Project claims don't hold

Jachary Frankel, director of the Utah Rivers Council, spouts a recurring theme: Diamond Fork water should go to Salt Lake County.

Frankel repeats his charge that the Central Utah Project water produced by the Diamond Fork project will be used only "to provide irrigation water for 20 alfalfa farmers in Juab County."

He made that charge again at the Wasatch Front Forum on Oct. 14.

It is true that some Juab County farmers will receive supplemental irrigation water, but Frankel overlooks the many farmers in Spanish Fork, Payson, Santaquin, and other areas will also get water.

South Utah County is one of the most productive agricultural areas in the state, and Utah's largest fruit growing area.

Howard Riley, Payson fruit farmer and member of the Central Utah Water Conservancy District Board, said, "We have 2,000 people down here who will benefit from that water, in addition to all the communities that will get municipal and industrial water."

Some 11,200 acre-feet of water is to be allocated for municipal and

industrial (M&I) purposes in south Utah County. M&I water needs are growing in Mapleton, Springville, Elk Ridge, Woodland Hills, Payson, Salem, Santaquin, Spanish Fork, Goshen and Genola. The population of these communities and the surrounding unincorporated areas is projected to increase from 60,350 in 1994 to 175,900 by the year 2035.

Frankel told the forum audience that Salt Lake County taxpayers are paying \$100 million in taxes for the project, but will not receive one drop of water from the Diamond Fork project.

Maybe they don't receive water directly, but consider this: Heavy demands have been placed on the Provo River to provide culinary water for Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County. These demands at one time threatened to dry up the lower Provo River and drop the level of Utah Lake, which also provides water for Salt Lake County.

To solve this problem partially, the Central Utah Water Conservancy District (CUWCD) made the "Strawberry-Deer Creek Exchange." It provides for 12,000 acre-feet of water

## BACK AT THE DESK



JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN

taken away from Utah Lake to be replaced by an identical amount transferred into Utah Lake from Strawberry Reservoir via the Spanish Fork River.

Maybe that transfer isn't direct, but nevertheless it is being accomplished.

Frankel repeatedly charges that Salt Lake County taxpayers are paying 70 percent of CUP costs, but are receiving only 24 percent of the water to justify his demand that the Diamond Fork water be transferred north.

Don Christiansen, manager of the CUWCD, counters that argument,

saying that Salt Lake County taxpayers are responsible for 67 percent of the taxes collected to fund development of the Bonneville Unit's M&I water supply and water users there will receive 65 percent of the M&I water. But that is only part of the picture. In addition, CUWCD has made major investments in Salt Lake County during the past 25 years. They include:

- Jordan Valley Water Treatment Plant - \$37.7 million
- Jordan Aqueduct System - \$26.4 million
- Jordan Terminal Reservoir - \$14.7 million
- 34 percent of water payment - \$5.0 million
- 70 percent of the Olmstead Tunnel Project (to carry water to Salt Lake County) - \$10.2 million
- 70 percent of the Olmstead Diversion Project - \$3.1 million.

These projects total \$115.1 million which were paid for by all the taxpayers in the 10-county (previously 12-county) water conservancy district.

Christiansen also points out contracts have already been signed with the Bureau of Reclamation and

affirmed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, which has 100,000 acre-feet of water in the Jordanelle Reservoir. Salt Lake County Water District and 20,000 acre-feet in Salt Lake City Municipal District.

Utah County water users pay 31,200 acre-feet of water in the county, 3.2 percent of the Wasatch County, a.f.).

Concerning the Diamond Fork water, Christiansen says this issue has been handled roughly and appropriately and approved morally and legally. The Spanish Fork water is just a we had a moral obligation to spend from the other or counties to complete that directly benefited the county.

Frankel speaks convincingly, but doesn't tell the whole story.

— Josephine Zimmerman  
water issues for The Herald